

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**MARCH 4, 2021**

**ATTENDING:** ALLEN, BERKEL, FRANK, PENGLASE, PULVER

**ABSENT:**

**OTHERS ATTENDING:** GEORGE MCGURN, RICHARD ALLEN

**CALLED TO ORDER AT:** 5:34 PM

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** February 2, 2021

**NOTICES:** SB meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am

**HANDOUTS:**

**REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS:** Paul emailed 2/18/2021

**AGENDA:**

### **(1) UPDATES ON THE FOLLOWING:**

#### **(A) School Budget Process**

School budget process this year (Tom sent email, will elaborate)

- (i) Outstanding Debt: \$344,000:  
Egremont share is 12.35% or \$42,484
- (ii) Capital Request: \$350,000  
Egremont share is 12.35% or \$43,225
- (iii) School consolidation report  
Grant won for \$125,000  
Final amount will be less than the \$15,000 request

#### **(B) BOS Budget process to date (Laura and Amy)**

Ongoing; A. Pulver will report on:

- Operational budget
- Capital budget
- School Budget

#### **(C) Van Committee (FC person)**

- (i) Grant for capital to purchase the van has been approved
- (ii) SB requests that a member of the FC advise a Van Committee to devise operating budget for the van; L. Allen graciously volunteered
- (iii) Previous budget line for SB Transport was approx. \$12,000

- (iv) Opportunities to defray costs of van operations
  - a. T. Berkel suggested that the Van Committee find complementary/synergistic opportunities to share van responsibility with the school
  - b. Background information: Great Barrington operates 2 vans as a lease with BRTA

**(D) Special Articles being considered by the SB**

- (i) These are capital items
- (ii) Items include fire truck, dump truck, Library construction, police cruiser, CPA (again), maintenance truck

**(E) Capital Planning Process and Capital Items**

Frank Penglase and Bryan Frank will continue to work on FY 22 CapEx Planning

**(F) Community Preservation Act**

- (i) 3% surcharge on real estate tax, collected by the Commonwealth, to support significant community projects; the Commonwealth then matches up to 100% of the funds; decisions on investment made by a committee; requirements include
  - a. 10% for open space
  - b. 10% for community housing
  - c. 10% for historic preservation
- (ii) Substantial funds currently exist in the fund due to proceeds from deed recordings
- (iii) Egremont did not adopt the CPA surcharge in the past  
Frank Penglase: “it’s a slush fund”
- (iv) Housing Committee (Fred Gordon) seeks to implement the CPA
- (v) Discussion of challenges, raised by Richard Allen
  - a. Restricted funds
  - b. Raises taxes without budgetary items (“money chasing a project”)

**(G) Southern Berkshire Volunteer Ambulance**

**(H) Retire Benefits**

On the question of whether to increase retirement benefits for healthcare contribution, the majority of the FC is against adding this article to the Warrant.

**(I) Water Department**

- (i) Nate Stalker is now certified to manage the equipment for the Water Department
- (ii) Laura will investigate

**(J) Grants being applied for – Library**

**(K) Compensation Committee recommendation to BOS/FC (Laura)**

- (i) Current proposed COLA – cost of living allowance—is 3%; total cost of the COLA adjustment would be \$4,543; this exceeds the actual COLA rate stipulated by the federal government

- (ii) For reference
  - a. The school extended 2%
  - b. Police collective bargaining is ~9.3%
  - c. DPW is ~2.75%
- (iii) New proposal:
  - a. COLA of 2%
- (L) Collective Bargaining: T. Berkel will represent the FC in negotiations

## **BUDGET REQUESTS**

See Schedule A attached (approved by BOS to date)

## **RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS:**

<u>ACCOUNT NO.</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT VOTED</u>
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None

## **OFFICIALS' ITEMS:**

## **CITIZENS' ITEMS:**

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE ITEMS/UPDATES:**

Next Finance Committee meeting: March 23, 2021 at 5:30 pm

**ADJOURNED:** 7:16 PM